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to all our readers
and advertisers!



It's all presents and
correct for Daysha
PAGE 8

Luton on sunday

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how much
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raised so far...

ON PAGE 7

OVERWHELMED: Rosie Cooper and Adam Webster raised £1,000 towards repairing the roof of All Saints Church



Couple help to raise the roof

IT was a case of divine intervention for a church targeted by lead thieves after a couple due to marry there stepped up to help raise vital funds.

Rosie Cooper, 23, of Old Bedford Road, said she has been 'overwhelmed' by the donations given by residents for the All Saints Church in Chalgrave Road, Chalgrave, after she started a crowd-funding campaign to help her dream wedding church.

She said: "I saw that they could be closing the church for the Christmas season and they put the pictures up they said the insurance might not be able to cover the entire

cost. Since we're getting married there I knew I wanted to do something."

Rosie, who is due to get hitched to fiancé Adam Webster at the historical building next July, managed to raise her target of £1,000 in a matter of weeks.

Police are investigating the theft which took place on December 3 and left the grade one listed building facing costly repairs.

"We had the same thing happen at work and I remember how costly it was," Rosie added.

The church is still awaiting a final bill for the repairs.

Stadium plan a hit

BY NICK SMITH
nick.smith@lutononsunday.co.uk

Luton Town targets move to Power Court in town centre

PLANS for Luton Town's new football stadium have met with support and excitement.

On Monday morning Luton Town announced they had selected the town centre site Power Court as the preferred location for a new 17,500 seat stadium, which would see The Hatters move away from Kenilworth Road, their home for 10 years.

Hatters fan Dan Heley said: "I

think that it's a fantastic decision for the club and town.

"Power Court allows for a much needed new stadium to be built at the heart of the town, and fits in well with the wider regeneration of that area."

Land next to Junction 10 of the M1 was previously mooted as a location for any new stadium and is marked as such in Luton Borough Council's local plan, which would

needed to be changed in order for the Power Court project to happen.

Gary Sweet, chief executive of the club, said: "The mission of the Luton Town 2020 group was a set of tasks to be completed by that year, one of which was a new stadium.

"We'd be hampering our own ambitions by moving to J10.

"The way we're going to use it allows us to fund a fantastic, ambitious football stadium in the centre

of town." The plan is for the 40 acre J10 site to be turned into a mixed use business site, both retail and offices.

Cllr Sian Timoney, portfolio holder for regeneration said: "It's brilliant news and an exciting opportunity for both the club and the town."

"It's something the council will look at when the planning application comes through."

Big bill for fly-tipping

ALMOST £100,000 has been spent clearing up fly-tipping in Central Bedfordshire in the last three years, *Lo*

can reveal. Central Bedfordshire Council said it was working 'relentlessly' to clamp-down on the problem after recording 5,452 fly-tipping incidents in 2013-15.

The figures follow recent revelations that neighbouring Luton Borough Council also had high levels of fly-tipping. Central Bedfordshire said the issue was down to 'opportunist' discarding their rubbish illegally.

■ Continued on page 2

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image of the week



ON SONG: Pupils at Ramridge Primary School brought some Christmas cheer to Luton Airport last week with their choir performing a repertoire of songs in the arrivals area, with money collected going to charities

Editor's Letter

Party like it's 2016

NEW Year's Eve is unique in its potential to be both the best night out on this and next year's calendar.

All the ingredients are there: friends, family, booze, a countdown and, of course, Jools Holland. But more often than not it is a let-down that leaves you with a stinking hangover. And that's if you're lucky.

Those same ingredients also have the potential to be utterly disastrous.

There are no guarantees when it comes to making a success of your new year celebrations, but following a few basic rules should help you steer clear of trouble. And you can start by lowering your expectations.

This is the best way to prevent disappointment and an excellent precedent to set for the year ahead.

Next up: accept that staying in is a probably good idea. Come 10.45pm, you may start wondering whether everyone in town is having a better time than you. They are not.

When it comes to food and drink, remember a handful of Twinklets is not a meal.

Don't drink too much.

But make sure you drink enough - the road to midnight is a long one.

Finally, enjoy the company of those around you safe in the knowledge that nobody knows more than three lines of Auld Lang Syne. Happy New Year!

Sarah Cox

Councillor issues 'positive' challenge to fly-tip snapper

BY CARL MUNGABI
carl.mungabi@lutononsunday.co.uk

■ Continued from front.

A COUNCIL leader has challenged a photographer who took pictures of illegally dumped rubbish to also showcase the town's 'positive aspects'.

Luton Labour leader councillor Hazel Simmons said the images taken by freelance photographer Tony Margioccchi and published in the national press had presented a 'misleading picture' of the town. On December 13 Luton on

Sunday ran a story highlighting the town's battle with fly-tipping.

The pictures were also published by the Daily Mail and the Metro with the headline, 'Is Luton the dirtiest town in Britain?'.

In a letter written to Los, she said: "As a local newspaper you rightly showed the effects of these crimes and hopefully encouraged your readers to think about how we've all got a part to play here.

"What we do take issue with is the national newspaper that used photographs taken by a freelance photographer to present a mis-

leading picture of the situation and the debate, and clearly had no interest in anything except putting the town and its residents down.

On behalf of the large majority of Luton residents and businesses who are proud of the town and our environment, I would like to invite the photographer to address this imbalance by showcasing the many positive aspects of our town so the wider world can see our vibrancy and investment potential."

Mr Margioccchi said: "All cllr Simmons wants to do is to show

the town centre where they spend their money when it's other parts of the town that really need help.

"Luton is a nightmare with regards to fly-tipping. They need to prosecute. I do not know how but they used to do covert CCTV, they need to go back to it.

"My concern is the health hazard. I can go out today and take really beautiful pictures of Luton but that is not the solution.

"I'm not having a go at the council but the problem is with the people who are doing the fly-tipping who need prosecuting."

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Viral tearjerker video spreads festive cheer

BY CARL MUNGAZI

carl.mungazi@lutononsunday.co.uk

MORE than 200,000 people have viewed a video of a boy crying after being told he would be moving into a new flat following months of living in a hotel.

Alexandra Burns and her two children, 10-year-old Billy and five-year-old Jasmine, have been living in hotels since September 4 this year after their landlord decided to take back his property.

She was unable to find another place to rent and was put up in a hotel by Luton Borough Council.

However, last Tuesday the council told her a temporary flat at Wesley House, in the town centre, had been made available for them.

Alex filmed herself sharing the news with her children, prompting Billy to break down in tears. It went viral after she shared it online and has been seen by 209,642 people to date.

She said: "I rang the Luton Law Centre and told them about my children and how the law says it should not be allowed for us to share one room.

"They said their housing solicitor would ring and after talking to them the council called to say they'd found a place for me."



Alex is now in the flat she has described as an 'early Christmas present' and looking for furniture.

She added: "I wanted to record the video because I know how much it means to Billy because he kept saying he did not like the hotel.

"My daughter did not say much to be

honest but she still did not like living in the hotel. It's really modern and I did not think it would be as nice as it is. The next thing is to try to get some furniture, so things like a sofa.

"When I moved out of my other flat I did not take anything into storage because of the cost."

Muslims deliver message of love

MUSLIMS in Luton handed out roses to strangers last Saturday to mark the birthday of the Prophet Muhammed.

Around 30 young Muslim volunteers handed out 1,000 roses outside the Town Hall on Saturday morning and early afternoon to an overwhelmingly positive response.

Dawood Masood, one of those in George Street on the day, said: "People

have been talking about it non-stop and a video from the day has 165,000 views online.

"It was overwhelmingly positive and it was great to get out there and spread our message to the people of Luton, whatever their faith or beliefs are.

"We wanted to show that Islam is based on love and peace and to bring positivity to the streets of Luton."



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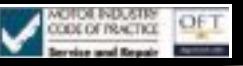
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and the Directors and staff
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By Sam Potter

IF YOU suffer from low back pain and sciatica, you are one of over 20 million adults in the UK with this often

crippling spinal condition. Shooting, stabbing and burning pains from the low back, sometimes with additional pain through the buttocks and down the legs are all symptoms of a pinched nerves often called "sciatica".

In severe cases, it can lead to muscle wasting, numbness and constant tingling down to the tip of the toes. Left untreated, the intense pain can rapidly wear you down and drain the joy out of life.

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For obvious reasons they can't help everyone at this reduced price, so please call soon to secure your special opportunity.

Some people prefer to consult directly with Peter Olsson rather than one of his fully trained specialists. While he is under incredible demand it is possible to



Sciatica Relief Expert Peter Olsson, says: In 10 years of practice, I've never seen a treatment as effective as Non-Surgical Re-Constructive Spinal Care for patients with sciatica or lower back pain

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Landlord's horror at shotgun attack



CRIME SCENE: Police attended Biscot Road to reports of a shooting, and inset, one of the bullet holes

BY CARL MUNGAZI
carl.mungazi@lutononsunday.co.uk

THE landlord of a house that was the scene of a shock shooting this week has spoken of the terrifying moment the bullets rained down on his tenant's property.

Bedfordshire Police are still investigating the incident in Biscot Road, Luton, after reports that shots were fired at around 6.20pm on Sunday.

Nobody was injured and the force said it is being treated as an 'isolated incident'.

Oli Khan, a chef who owns five properties in Biscot Road, said he was at work when he was told that one of his tenants had found a bullet lodged in the wall.

Mr Khan said: "We don't know what happened but some people said there were people shouting outside."

"Somebody fired a gun and the bullet came through the window of the house which is next door to mine."

"I own five houses here and there is a couple living in that room. They saw that the window was broken and then they called us and said they were really scared that somebody had tried to shoot them. I was not at home and my brother called the police and they arrived within two minutes."

"People are not just allowed to have guns so these people must have illegal guns."

On Sunday the scene was examined by officers with road closures still in place at Biscot Road, at the junctions with Sheridan Road, Waldeck Road, Cavendish Road and Beaumont Road on Monday.

Anyone with information that could assist the investigation or who witnessed the incident is asked to contact police on 101.

Right up your street

Town is more festive than you might think



THIS week Howard Chandler writes about Christmas-themed street names...

What festive street names can be seen in Luton? Firstly, we have Ivy Road and Mistletoe Hill. Carol Close is another and so is Robinswood in Bushmead and Holly Street. St Mary's Road was also Holly Walk from at least 1862 but in 1926 the council minutes record the 'uselessness' of having two names for one road and so, it was changed.



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Our Keech appeal passes £9,000!

ONE WISH: Two-time organ transplant patient Jakub Steczkiewicz, six, asked to go home for Christmas

OUR Christmas appeal for Keech Hospice Care looks set to break the £10,000 barrier over the coming week.

The Keech Christmas Stars appeal - launched in November - has already broken the £9,000 mark with the total set to be announced in the new year.

Liz Searle, acting CEO of Keech Hospice Care, said: "Here at Keech, we would truly like to thank *Luton on Sunday* and all of its readers for backing Keech's Christmas Stars Appeal.

"On behalf of us all here at Keech, and our patients and their families, thank you for the support you have shown Keech throughout 2015 and please accept our best wishes for the new

year." Last week's front page story about six-year-old Jakub Steczkiewicz's wish to spend a Christmas at home, featuring the work that Keech has done to help him over the years, hit national headlines this week.

The story of this incredible little boy - a two-time organ transplant patient - says everything about why we partnered with the local hospice this Christmas. And there is still time to donate.

Send your contribution freepost to: Keech Hospice Care, Great Bramingham Lane, Streatley, Luton, LU3 3NT or by texting KHCS15 and the amount, to 70070.

We will announce the estimated final total raised in next week's *Luton on Sunday*.

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Store spreading Christmas spirit with hamper giveaway

WHILE most people were getting ready for the big day staff at a convenience store spent their Christmas Eve spreading the festive cheer.

The Co-operative store, in Westfield Road, Dunstable, gave hampers and treats to the police, fire service and Luton and Dunstable Hospital. Ian Chester, Co-op manager, said the team wanted to rec-

ognise the 'forgotten' people who worked on Christmas Day while everyone else enjoyed themselves at home.

He said: "The idea was to do it for the community that supports as a business. We wanted to support the people that support the community, the people that work on Christmas Day that people forget about."

Centre over the limit for boozing

BY CARL MUNGAZI
carl.mungazi@lutononsunday.co.uk

CONCERNS over street drinking in the town centre have led councillors to restrict a newsagent's licensing conditions.

Express News, in Park Street, has been told it can only sell alcohol between 10am and 10pm instead of the 6am to 2pm timeframe the shop's new owner has applied for.

The decision was made during a meeting on Tuesday chaired by mayor of Luton, councillor Dave Taylor.

Earlier this year, while under its previous management, the shop was fined £935 for

selling two bottles of alcohol to minors.

The application by the new owner had been opposed by Bedfordshire Police and the Salvation Army, which both said the area was popular with street drinkers.

The police force said it had received 19 calls related to anti-social behaviour in Park Street since October 1 this year.

However, cllr Taylor said it would have been 'unreasonable' to prevent the shop from selling alcohol altogether.

He added: "The shop cannot sell anything above the 5.5 per cent alcohol by volume level, so none of those strong lagers or ciders.

"They also agreed they will be responsible and we felt assured by what they said."



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DOZYPARKER

Path-etic!

THIS week's offender is a Vauxhall Corsa spotted in St Joseph's Close on Tuesday afternoon.

The driver of this vehicle clearly did not get the memo about it being the season of goodwill, preferring instead to take up more than half the pavement and annoy unsuspecting pedestrians.

If you see any other Dozy Parkers in Luton over the Christmas period email your photos to editor@lsnmedia.co.uk



**Luton
on sunday**

READALLOVER



IT'S every *LoS* helps for Tesco team leader Alex Majoni, who took some time out of his busy festive schedule to keep himself up to date with the latest news.

Looking after Christmas shoppers is hard work so we're glad to see Alex has found some worthwhile reading to take his mind off the job. Snap yourself or a friend reading *Luton on Sunday* and send your picture to editor@lsnmedia.co.uk and you might appear in next week's paper!

BLOGGER OF THE WEEK: Ashuk Ahmed

Giving youth a chance



IN this week's blog, Ashuk Ahmed MBE talks about Diverse FM, a community radio station which strives to promote youth culture and connect local communities. Ashuk has lived in Luton for 35 years and has worked with a number of voluntary organisations.

RECENTLY Diverse FM held its annual awards ceremony and joint fundraiser at Venue Central in Luton.

More than 300 guests attended, including Kelvin Hopkins MP, mayor of Luton, councillor Dave Taylor, Helen Nellis Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Olly Martins PCC for Bedfordshire and Kathryn Holloway PCC candidate for the Conservatives.

The evening was hosted by Simba Muparasta and Tayebur Rahman, two of our young regular volunteers.

There were awards in nine categories, including student of the year, highest achiever, role model of the year and volunteer of the year.

Among those recognised were Rokib Miah, Chelsea Idrees, Hamad Abukar Abdi, Nadieer Ahmed, Robert Grimmer, Fakhru Hussain, Yakub Ali, Shannon Douglas, Connor Naughton and Joe Flemons.

Joe Flemons started with Diverse FM about three years ago as a volunteer presenter.

After a short while, his talent was recognised and he was offered his own weekend show, leading to him becoming a regular drive time presenter.

Diverse FM provided the platform and real life experience to Joe needed to achieve his dream. After that he was spotted by Capital FM, which offered him two regular weekend shows.

Joe recently started his show and is broadcasting to millions of listeners across the UK.

When speaking about this,

he said: "It's a real dream come true to be given my own slot on the Capital Network broadcasting across the UK, especially on a Friday night, which has such importance in setting the mood for the entire weekend.

"I still have to pinch myself when I look at all the names of presenters I've loved, listened to and learned from for a long time now alongside my name on the schedule, it's such a massive honour.

"I can't thank Mick Foster and the entire team at Diverse FM for their role in giving my journey a place to start three years ago. It has given me the chance to improve my overall understanding of radio.

"To be a part of such an elite bunch of presenters within the global family is still something I am ridiculously proud of, every time I'm on air, and I can't wait to get stuck into my new show alongside my final year studies as a broadcast journalism student."

At the ceremony young people and volunteers from Diverse FM, supported by Mitalee Youth Association, ASR Learning Centre, One Stop Advice Centre, Community Interest Luton CIC and Security Training Solutions raised £3,000 for Human Appeal, £1,000 for Cancer Research UK and another £1,000 for the refugees in Calais.

There was also a collection of more than 70 boxes of non-perishable food items for Luton Foodbank.

Your Luton Letters



We need better from EU

ONE thing that I hope will change if we leave the EU is the quality of the goods that are sold in our shops.

I find that things like shoes don't fit and also the toys aren't as good as they used to be.

I've kept some of my old toys from when I was a kid. They are more than 50-years old. Toys these days break in 50 minutes. They are not meant to last, so you go out and buy more badly made rubbish. Let's start making our own stuff. You can't beat good old fashioned British craftsmanship. I

always prefer to buy British made stuff. If I can find it.

John Tucker
Bracklesham Gardens
Luton

PCC shouldn't be political

I SEE in this week's edition (*LoS*, 20.12.2015) that Olly Martins is to be the Labour party's candidate for the next election to the post of PCC.

I did not vote in the last such election, as a personal protest against the politicisation of this post and will repeat my action this time.

I happen to feel that a post of this nature should be apolitical and there

should be no candidates supported by, or affiliated to any political party.

All candidates for this post should be independent and be devoted entirely to the effective operation of the police and the citizens they serve.

Peter Barker
Bedford

Common sense prevails

BREATHALYSING people before they enter a night club is not only a common sense idea it's also long overdue.

For years now I've been told of folk 'priming' themselves on strong alcohol before going out for the night. I recently heard one bragging that she was so high that she couldn't even remember the taxi journey from home.

Drunkenness is known to be a major cause of anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, violence and even rape.

Therefore I was appalled when I read in last week's *Luton on Sunday* that the response of one local 'entertainments manager' was to dismiss breathalysing as being unnecessary and 'only likely to cause door staff more problems'.

Given the clear link between bad behaviour and excess alcohol it should become law that people are 'below the limit' when entering such places.

It needn't involve testing everyone – just a random one in ten, say – but the penalty if caught should be an automatic twelve months ban from the club.

Ron Turvey
Stanmore Crescent
Luton

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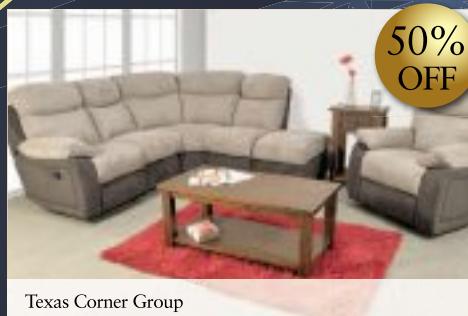
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Wheely good ride



Cycling for good cause

A MAN who cycled through 34 countries in ten months for charity has returned home.

Amer Nazir has raised almost £200,000 in pledges for the Mercy Worldwide charity (mwtrust.com), to support orphan children around the world through a 'very tough' journey which took him through difficult terrain and challenging locations.

He said: "Orphans are people I have affinity towards. I work in conflict zones and I have this empathy towards them. It's always been in the back of my mind to do something for them."



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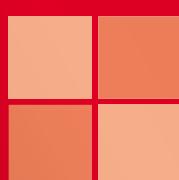
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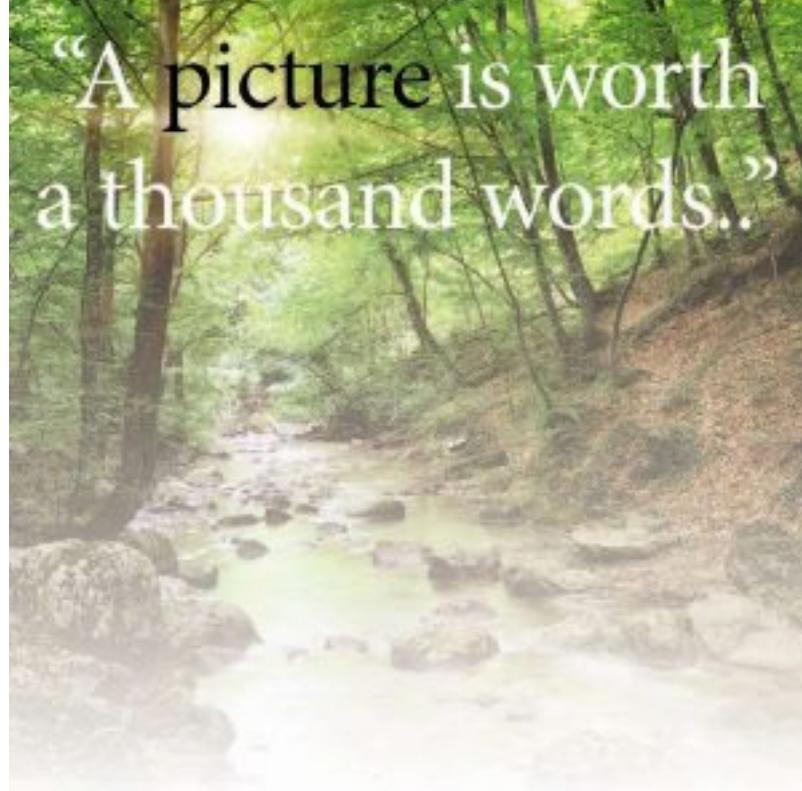
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Fans give thumbs up to beauty salon

BY CARL MUNGIZI

carl.mungizi@lutononsunday.co.uk

A BEAUTY business has been named the best in the country in an online vote in which the choice is made through a public vote.

KG Salon, in Barton-le-Clay, has been crowned the Fans' Choice Award winner for 2015 for its services.

The awards, based in the USA, are based on the amount of nominations and votes businesses receive from their clients.

Owner Katie Godfrey, 26, who last year won Eyelash Technician of the Year at a separate awards ceremony, said it was a 'special'

moment for her business.

She said: "The awards we have won before have been by professional bodies but this one is special because people went out of their way to vote for us. They did not just give us a rating but left personal comments."

Katie also said the award had given her the drive to 'push forward'. Last year she opened a new blow dry bar in Ampthill with a friend.

She said: "Next year we have new treatments coming up, we are not just sticking to what people know."

"Winning that award has given us a boost for what is coming next and it makes us stand out from the crowd."

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It was a real cracker!



WINNERS: Winners Harriet Page (above) and Michelle Smithers (right) won £250 vouchers and chose to spend them at Debenhams and The Mall respectively



Neli Gogishulli and Claire Makepeace (left) with Bake Off winner Nadira and Mary McDonnell and Rachel Burns (right) with BID's Ahmed Khan



TOWN centre businesses and shoppers have already enjoyed an extra-special Christmas, with over £2,000 worth of shopping vouchers and gift vouchers awarded by Luton Business Improvement District (BID)'s Christmas Cracker prize draw.

Neli Gogishulli and Claire Makepeace were the first two lucky winners, choosing to spend their £250 vouchers in New Look and Tesco respectively. In the same week, flight attendant Alessandra Catania won a free year's admission to Cineworld.

One of the second week's winners, Saliha Patel, had a baby girl just four weeks ago and said her £250 voucher couldn't have come at a better time.

"A couple of my friends knew about the Christmas Cracker draw and so I picked up a ticket in Boots – which is also where I've chosen to spend my voucher.

"There are so many things to buy with a new baby – nappies, toiletries, things like that – so it's just perfect to have won the Luton Christmas Cracker."

Sabina Islam also won £250 in week two, and being a huge Playstation 4 fan she selected GAME in which to spend her voucher.

Lisa Taplin received a year's membership for The Gym.

In week three, Sameem Riaz and Rachel Burns chose Next and Debenhams respec-

tively for their £250 vouchers, and Mary McDonnell received a £200 gift card to spend in The Mall.

Finally, rounding off the Christmas Cracker last week, Michelle Smithers chose The Mall in which to spend her £250, and was looking forward to treating her young son, while Harriet Page selected Debenhams.

The last lucky Christmas Cracker entrant, Leigh Hill, got a £100 Debenhams card.

Gavin O'Brien, Chairman of Luton BID, said: "The BID has been delighted with the response to this inaugural Luton Christmas Cracker prize draw.

"We'd like to thank the businesses that kindly donated gift cards to our draw."

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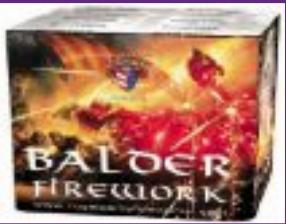
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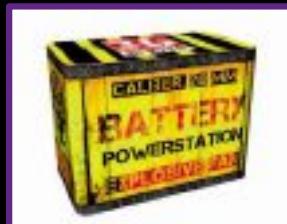
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Little girl helps sick kids enjoy Christmas

BY NICK SMITH

nick.smith@lutononsunday.co.uk

A SIX-year-old girl has done her bit to spread some Christmas cheer by handing out presents to sick children at Luton and Dunstable Hospital.

Daysha Badu, of Hockwell Ring, Luton, has collected almost 70 presents to give out, more than enough for each of the 64 beds in the children's ward.

Daysha's mother, Elizabeth, said: "The idea came to her when she was being taken to get a reward for doing well on her spelling test, but she decided she'd rather see it go to sick children instead.

"I only started organising it last weekend and on Monday I got help from parents of Daysha's classmates who wanted to get involved.

"Around 35 people, children and parents, turned up with donations of gifts or money to put towards it or just to get involved and help us wrap them all.

"I'd just like to say thank you to the parents at Moorlands Free School for their help and World of Faith



SPREADING CHEER: Daysha Badu and her mother Elizabeth's donation has been gladly received and spirits lifted by her generosity

International Christian Centre for letting us use their building to get together to wrap all the presents."

The gifts were dropped off on Christmas Eve and any spares will be offered to kids who visit A&E over the Christmas period.

Sarah Amexhetia, fundraising manager at the Luton and Dunstable University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We are so grateful for the generosity and

support we have received at the hospital this Christmas from the local community.

"Donations like these made by Daysha Badu really help to lift our patients' spirits.

"This is especially true for the children and elderly patients.

"We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Daysha and her family for collecting presents for the ward and sharing the true spirit of the season."

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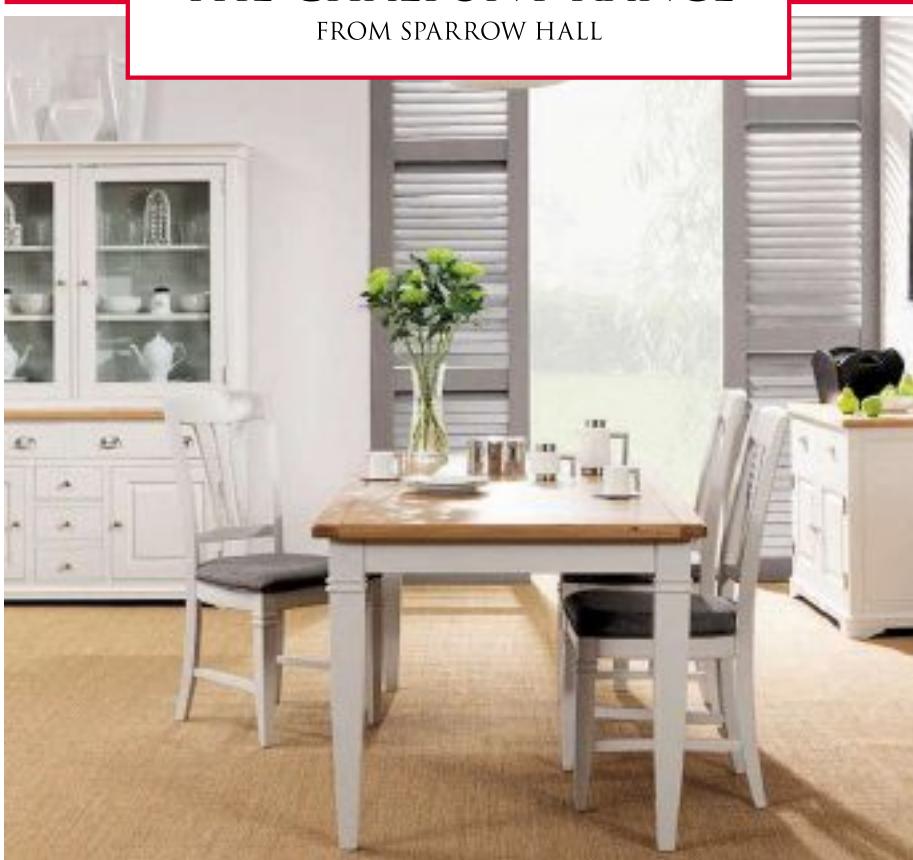


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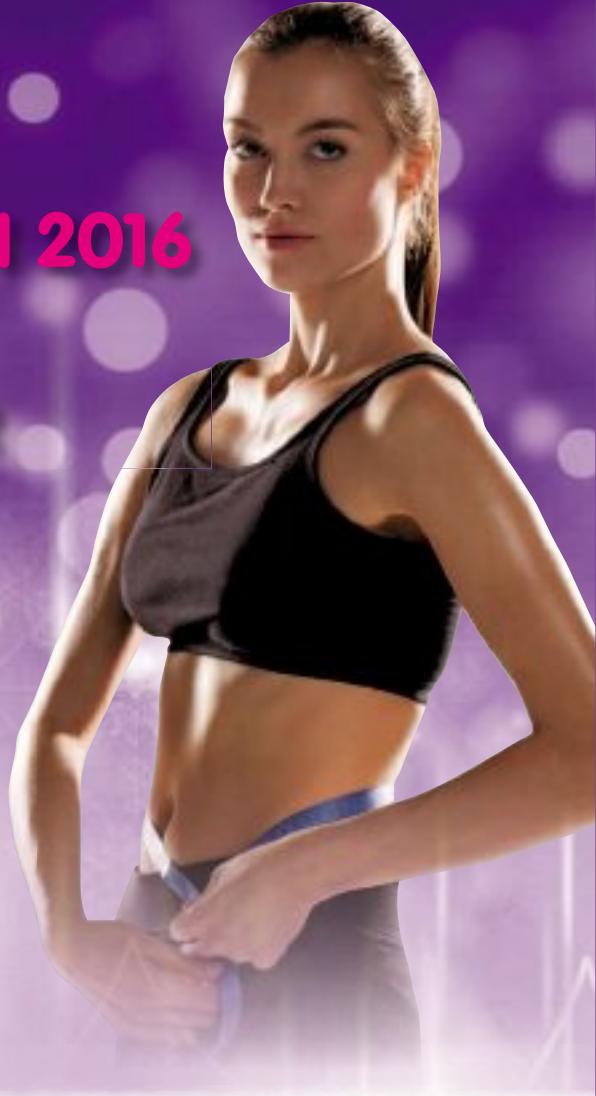
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Taking our calls

IN the last of our series from the frontline of policing, CARL MUNGAZI heads for Bedfordshire Police's force control room...

"Hello, Bedfordshire Police. How can I help you?"

What happens in the period between a phone call to the police and the arrival of an officer?

Well, more than you might realise. The force control room at Bedfordshire Police's Kempston headquarters serves to ensure that officers out on the street know where they are going and who or what they are looking for.

The team takes between 430-450,000 calls a year, with 126,000 of them coming via the 999 service.

Working in shift patterns, the 113-strong team is made up of call handlers and radio operators who are tasked with being the public's first point of contact.

Wayne Humberstone, head of the control room, said: "We are the first line of contact with the force so my staff are either on the telephone or in the enquiry office and are generally the first people to see or the first to take a call from someone, so it all starts here.

"For me it's about manag-

WATCHING OVER US: Radio operator Sarah Bird keeps tabs on police officers all over the county and right, PC Heather Hutchinson is one of the first to speak with the public



ing them and making sure we have enough staff there, making sure we can respond to the calls coming in for service in a timely way and ensuring that the quality of those calls is assessed."

Call handlers normally deal with one call at a time, gathering background information and cross-referencing it with other cases.

If an officer is then called out, they will be looked after by a radio operator who is

also keeping an eye on several other live jobs.

During my 'shift' at the control room I spent time with PC Heather Hutchinson, one of the many officers who spends time helping out.

She joined the force in 2004 and spent four years taking calls before becoming an officer.

PC Hutchinson said: "We sometimes have people who call and ask if they are want-

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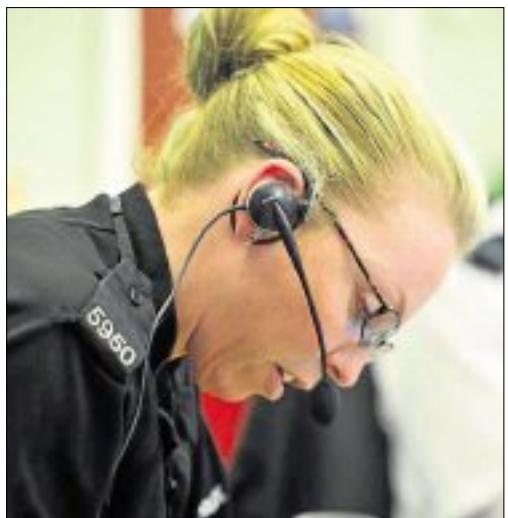
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ed. But if people want information about themselves they have to go through the right department.

"I remember I once had one guy call who was clearly responsible for a domestic abuse incident and ask if he was wanted."

The police's 24-hour nature means the control room is constantly evolving. Staff levels are checked every 15 minutes and a piece of software compares

this with the number of calls received last year.

This helps the force plan in advance for busy periods such as Halloween and New Year's Eve when they receive double the number of calls.

Planning for Christmas began in July.

However, for Mr Humberstone and his team, recent changes in public service funding has added new dimensions to their roles.

He said: "The police force has really become society's social workers.

"When other agencies are not able to respond to incidents - we're 24/7 and they might not be, or they are not able to respond as they used to - it ultimately falls to the police to deal with because our primary function is to preserve life.

"The pressures are massive and shouldn't be underestimated."

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on the go

British wildlife through a lens...

WHAT did one squirrel say to the other squirrel?
“How do my whiskers look? I have to get ready for my close-up.”
Okay, that was a bad joke but there is nothing shabby about the British Wildlife Photography Awards exhibition which is making a welcome return to Stockwood Discovery Centre. The free event, which runs from January 16-March 20, showcases the beauty of British wildlife as it has

been captured in pictures. Thousands of amateur and professional photographers have been vying to win in 16 categories, including a special one for high-definition wildlife video and three junior categories for young people. The winning entry, pictured, by Barrie Williams is of gannets on a cliff edge. One of the judges, Paul Wilkinson, said: “Sea cliffs provide a haven from potential predators, a place for birds

to breed, hunt and safely raise the next generation. This vertigo-inducing shot shows guano-stained rocks, the bustle of lower ledges with birds packed tightly and gannets hunting over the inky seas below. The judges felt it was the unique perspective of this shot and its ability to reveal something new about seabird life that made it such a firm favourite.” Visit lutonculture.com to find out more.

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From New York to Dunstable

IN George Balanchine's The Nutcracker, Tchaikovsky's beloved melodies transport the young and young at heart to a magical world where mischievous mice besiege a battalion of toy soldiers, and an onstage blizzard leads to an enchanted Land of Sweets.

In the New York City Ballet's famously extravagant staging, Balanchine's stunning choreography shines amidst awe-inspiring set pieces, ornate costumes and grand one-of-a-kind visual effects,

like the one-tonne Christmas tree that grows to an astonishing 40 feet.

Tickets for this encore screening from the David Koch Theatre in New York City cost £10, with a £1.95 transaction fee.

THE NUTCRACKER
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MUSIC

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Sonatas paired up

IT has always been said that it takes two to tango.

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The pair in question this time is husband and wife team clarinettist Jean Johnson and pianist Steven Osborne.

Between them they boast a vast amount of recital experience which

has seen them travel the world and produce recordings, including their Clarinet Sonatas album released last June.

American-born Johnson cut her teeth under the tutelage of Michael Sussman at the University of Massachusetts. After that she went to Indiana University as an associate instructor in clarinet, studying with accomplished clarinetists Eli Eban and

Alfred Prinz.

Her career began with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and she has since performed in venues such as the Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall and the Palais des Beaux-Arts.

Johnson's husband Steven has been called one of the 'great pianists of his generation' and in 2013 he was named the The Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist of the Year

and given his second Gramophone Award.

He works regularly with the major orchestras such as the London Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony, BBC Symphony and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras.

Tickets for the show cost £15 and can be purchased by calling the box office 01582 707707 or visiting luton-culture.com

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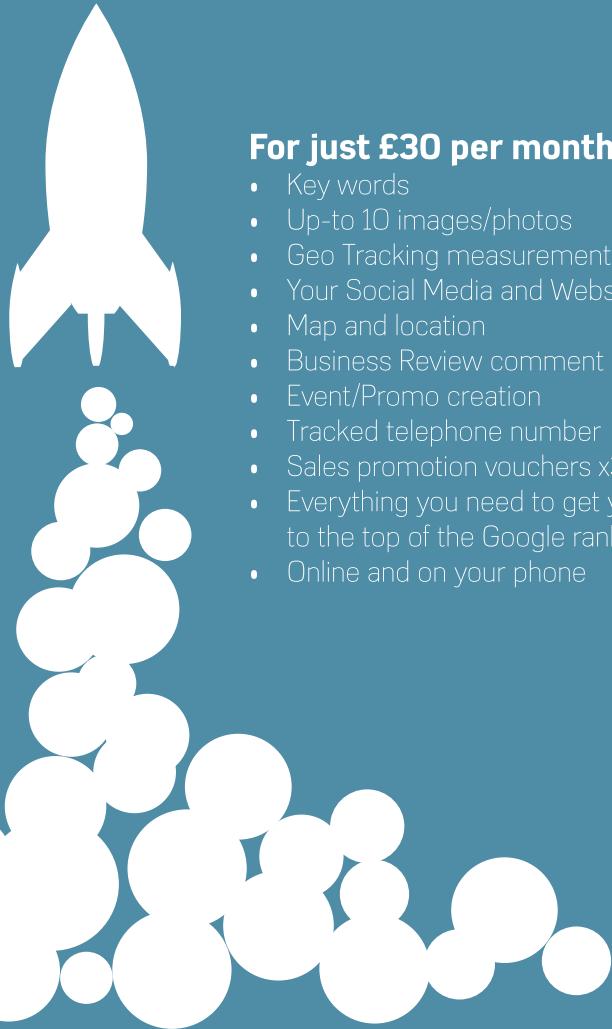
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Prices Includes:

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Nice Flower Parade & the Menton Lemon Festival

Departing on 11, 15, 22 & 26 February 2016

Join us on the French Riviera for a fiesta of fruit and flowers as we visit two of the region's most vibrant events. Nice Flower Parade is an integral part of the city's carnival and the only one of its kind in the world. Join the crowd amid floral showers of gladioli, mimosa, gerberas, lilies, daisies, roses and carnations, as spectacular floats and extravagant characters line the promenade. Just along the coast, the elegant town of Menton hosts its unique Lemon Festival where we see the Moonlit Parade, an illuminating event which is a celebration of the sun with everyone dancing in the moonlight. Together these events attract thousands of visitors each year, so book your place today enjoy a burst of zest and colour this winter.

Prices Includes:

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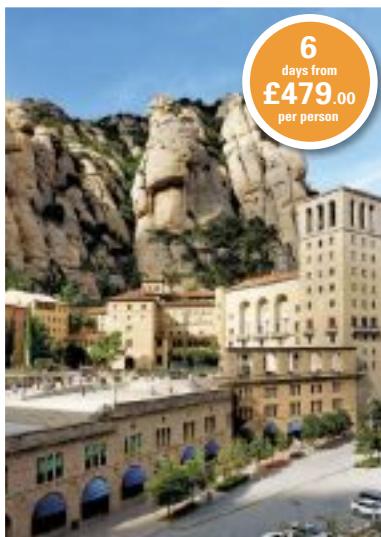
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Visit two of Europe's most spectacular floral displays and enjoy the unforgettable scent and colour as millions of bulbs burst into life. For eight weeks of the year, Keukenhof Gardens opens its gates to visitors from around the world, who come to admire a picture perfect landscape filled with more than seven million flowers - it is without doubt the best place to see tulips in the Netherlands. In the neighbouring country of Belgium, the beautiful grounds surrounding Château de Grand-Bigard are also ablaze with the colour of over 1.5 million hand planted bulbs. Together with the fascinating cities of Amsterdam, Antwerp and Brussels, this is a wonderful springtime break.

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- Visit to Floralia at Château de Grand-Bigard
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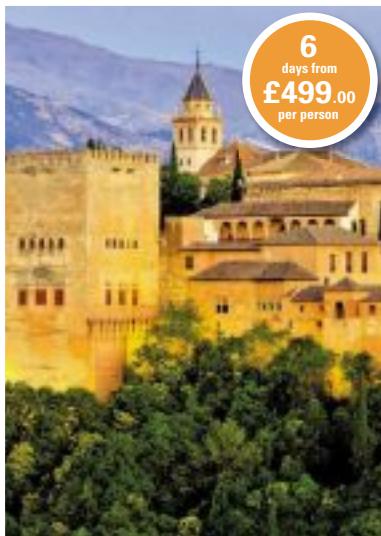
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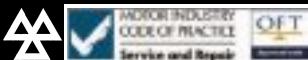
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MOTORINGNEWS

To Infiniti and beyond with enhanced power and steering

The new 2016 Infiniti Q50 sports saloon is being launched with a number of performance and dynamic upgrades that deliver a more empowering and rewarding drive experience. The comprehensive updates include next-generation ride and handling technologies and all-new advanced turbocharged V6 powertrains.

Making its debut on an Infiniti is the company's second-generation Direct Adaptive Steering™, comprehensively modified from the ground-breaking first-generation system. The standard steering mode now offers advanced levels of steering feel and feedback – more akin to that of a conventional steering system.

The new Q50 also features Infiniti's Dynamic Digital Suspension (DDS) for the first time, which gives the sports saloon an optimal blend of ride comfort and class-leading response and agility. For those drivers looking for a blend of dynamic settings tailored to their own particular requirements and tastes, the Q50's Drive Mode Selector (DMS) can be augmented with a 'Personal' mode, which



POWERING UP: The Infiniti Q50 sports has been given some dynamic upgrades

permits a bespoke mix of engine, suspension and steering characteristics.

Five powertrain options are offered with the Infiniti Q50, and for the 2016 model these include an advanced, all-new 3.0-litre V6 twin-turbo gasoline engine with

direct injection. The Q50 was developed from the outset to showcase Infiniti's daring design, dynamic performance and class-leading technologies within the sports saloon segment. Now in its third year, Q50 global sales between January and October

2015 reached almost 50,000 cars – representing a 65% increase compared to the same period in 2014.

A range of new and innovative ride and handling technologies deliver on the promise of the Q50's daring design, and instill confidence in all driving conditions.

The changes to DAS – the world's first digital steering system – have been made following extensive consultation with existing Q50 customers around the world and over 625,000 miles of testing.

For the new second generation Direct Adaptive Steering, engineers have optimized the control logic to improve feedback from the road.

Adaptive Shift Control enhances gear selection by using a lateral acceleration sensor to detect changes in the road, such as hills and turns. Sport mode allows the driver to select a more aggressive shift pattern with automatic up- and down-shifting at higher rpm. The combined effect is for any driver to enjoy quick, smooth shifts and gear choices that are appropriate to both the road and the desired driving style.

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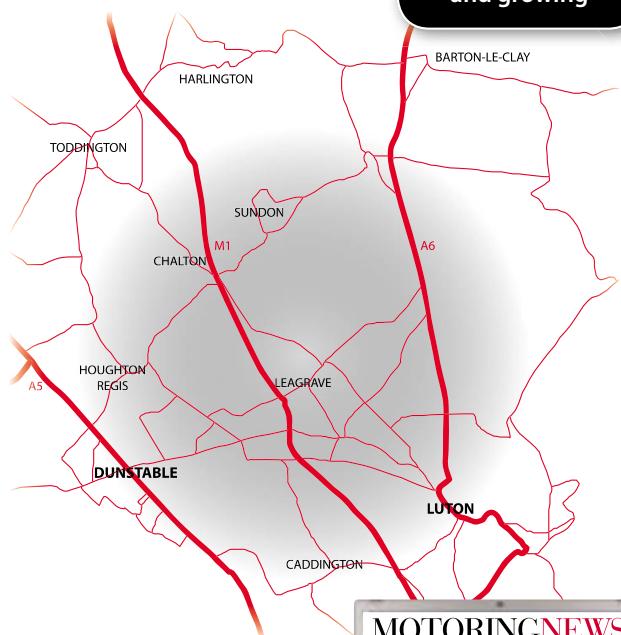
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Honda Civic R Type Take a look inside...

The Honda Civic Type R returns, this time with 310PS beneath the bonnet thanks to forced induction. Drive goes to the front wheel via a six-speed manual 'box, so no change there, but under the skin, this thing's rammed with trick bits. It looks the real deal.

The headline figures are undeniably impressive. Power comes courtesy of a direct-injected turbocharged 2.0 litre VTEC petrol engine, which really delivers a solid punch of both power and torque. Peak power output is 310PS at 6,500rpm, and peak torque is 400Nm at 2,500rpm. If you still associate hot Hondas with having no torque, it's time to recalibrate. Red-lining at 7,000rpm, the turbocharged four-cylinder engine catapults the Civic to 62mph in 5.7 seconds, which is extremely brisk for a front-wheel drive car. As indeed is the top speed of 167mph. A short-throw six-speed manual transmission will satisfy the purists and the car is equipped with a Brembo brake package, with 350mm drilled discs up front.

The Type R really amps up the otherwise slightly muted styling of the ninth-generation Civic. A new, almost completely flat

underside sucks the car onto the road and the rear wing, front splitter and side skirts are also demonstrably functional. Big grilles in the bumpers direct cooling air to the engine and brakes. The lightweight 19-inch alloy wheels look pretty mean with their 34-series rubber.

The signature colour scheme is Championship White, but the Civic's also offered in pearl-reflective Crystal Black, metallic Polished Metal, metallic Brilliant Sporty Blue and Milano Red.

The cabin gets the trademark machined-alloy Type R gear lever. High-backed sports seats grip the front occupants with a suede-effect fabric offset by red double stitching. The red highlights continue across the leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearshift gaiter.

The latest Civic Type R makes a whole lot of impressive numbers but the acid test will come against its most talented European rivals. Something tells us that this British-built Honda will manage to inveigle itself into its own niche and feel quite unlike the rest of the field. Type Rs have always been something different, something very special and this one promises to be no different, turbo or otherwise.



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on the road

Five Stars For Mercedes-Benz GLC

The Mercedes-Benz GLC has achieved the top score in the Euro NCAP rating. The new mid-size SUV has received five stars, continuing the Mercedes-Benz success story in impressive style. The GLC has achieved five stars for occupant safety, child safety, pedestrian protection and its assistance systems – giving it the maximum score in the Euro

NCAP rating. The basis for this outstanding result is the perfect interaction between active and passive safety: the combination of a highly rigid safety passenger cell, highly effective restraint systems, the latest driver assistance systems and other measures leads to first-class test results.

Ford Commercial Sales Sail Through 100,000 for 2015

Ford has sold more than 100,000 commercial vehicles (CV) for the year-to-date, the first time sales have passed six figures in a full year since 1989. Ford CV sales for November were at the highest-ever level for more than 25 years, and more than double those of its nearest rival. Ford is on track to record its highest-ever commercial vehicle sales volume for 2015, following a record year in 1989 at 104,721 sales. 2015 marks



the Ford Transit's 50th year of market leadership, and the first full year of sales for the expanded Ford Transit range since the Transit Courier was launched in mid-2014.



JAGUAR LAND ROVER CONFIRMS NEW SLOVAKIAN FACTORY



Jaguar Land Rover has confirmed that it will be the first British carmaker to open a manufacturing facility in Slovakia. The announcement

follows an agreement between the company and the Government of the Slovak Republic to build a new plant in the city of Nitra. The new world-class £1 billion premium manufacturing facility will eventually employ around 2,800 people. The announcement follows Jaguar Land Rover's recent confirmation to double its investment in its engine plant in the UK to almost £1 billion – the largest injection into a new British manufacturing plant in decades creating several hundred new jobs

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on the road

New Mitsubishi L200
– What Van?
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The Mitsubishi L200 is the 2016 What Van? Light Commercial Vehicle of the Year. The award, from the UK's leading LCV magazine, rewards the new pickup's massive improvement in interior quality, drive and, crucially for light commercial vehicle operators, efficiency. Mitsubishi collected the coveted trophy at the exclusive What Van? Awards luncheon, held in partnership with fuel card giant Allstar at The Brewery in London on Tuesday 15 December. The L200 also collected the Pickup of the Year award, while Mitsubishi completed a hat-trick with the Outlander 4Work PHEV winning the What Van? Green Award.

The New SLC – New Name, New Dynamic



In March 2016, 20 years on from the birth of its segment, the archetypal compact roadster is to be relaunched with a new name – SLC – significantly optimised technology and an enhanced look. The name change acknowledges the traditionally close relationship with the C-Class, from which much of the roadster's technology is derived. There are new additions to the model line-up – the sporty top-of-the-line Mercedes-AMG SLC 43 and the entry-level SLC 180. In visual terms, stand-out features include the standard-fit diamond radiator grille and the LED Intelligent Light System (optional extra). Prices will be announced when the SLC is available to order in mid-January 2016, with first cars arriving in showrooms from April 2016.

Hyundai Motor's New Alternative-Fuel Ioniq

A new rendering of Hyundai Motor's all-new IONIQ hints at how the innovative, alternative-fuel compact vehicle, which is due for launch in early 2016, will combine head-turning good looks with class-leading aerodynamic performance. Hyundai Motor has confirmed that the IONIQ will be the world's first car to offer a

choice of three efficient and ultra-low-emission powertrains: full electric, plug-in gasoline / electric hybrid, or gasoline / electric hybrid. With a sleek, coupe-like silhouette and numerous eye-catching details, its confident design is a match for its bold environmental credentials



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Short Breaks



Easter in Cornwall & Eden

Departing on 25 March 2016

Take a magical trek through the world's largest indoor rainforest this Easter, before enjoying the scent and colour of the Californian grasslands and South Africa. The Eden Project is a breathtaking recreation of some of the most precious regions on Earth and since it opened back in 2001 it has become one of Cornwall's top attractions. We enjoy a full day here on Easter Sunday, following a visit to the Easter Food and Craft Fair held in the grounds of the beautiful manor house of Trerife, a fantastic event which attracts some of the finest local food producers and art and craft designers. Plus, no visit to Cornwall is complete without spending some time along its glorious coastline, so we have also arranged visits to the pretty resorts of St Ives and Looe.

Prices Includes:

- Private coach travel from your local area
- Three nights' stay with three course evening meal & cooked breakfast
- Visit to the Trerife Easter Food & Craft Fair
- Entrance to the Eden Project
- Visits to St Ives & Looe



Cirque du Soleil at the Royal Albert Hall

Departing on 11 February 2016

Since its dawn in 1984, Cirque du Soleil has dazzled audiences around the world with a dramatic mix of circus arts and street entertainment; and now they are set to mark their 20th year at the Royal Albert Hall. This dream-like production - which has never been staged in the UK - will transport you to a mysterious island governed by goddesses and guided by the cycles of the moon, where unfolds an epic and emotional love story between Queen Prospera's daughter and a brave young suitor. Witness the magical scenes, together with aerial acrobatics, hoop diving, dancing, juggling, teeterboard acts and Icarian games, not to mention the fabulous costumes and makeup. So book your place today and get ready for a breathtaking experience.

Prices Includes:

- Private coach travel from your local area
- One night's stay with three course evening meal & cooked breakfast
- Ticket to Cirque du Soleil Amaluna at the Royal Albert Hall
- Free time in London



Metropolitan Police's Crime Museum

Departing on 5 March 2016

For over 140 years the Metropolitan Police have seized items linked to criminal cases, forming a collection that was previously only accessible to police professionals. Now, for the first time in history, some of these never-before-seen artefacts will go on public display at the Museum of London and our short break is the perfect opportunity to see them.

Prices Includes:

- Private coach travel from your local area
- One night's stay with three course evening meal & cooked breakfast
- Entrance to the Household Cavalry Museum
- Entrance to the Crime Museum Uncovered exhibition at the Museum of London



Great Devon & Somerset Railway Journeys

Departing on 18 March & 1 April 2016

Discover some of England's legendary railway lines as featured on Michael Portillo's BBC2 programme Great British Railway Journeys. During our break you can relive the golden age of steam and travel the length of the longest heritage railway in the country, before catching the train from England's highest narrow gauge railway station, 1,000 feet up on the wilds of Exmoor.

Prices Includes:

- Private coach travel from your local area
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- Journey on the West Somerset Steam Railway
- Journey on the Lynton & Barnstaple Steam Railway
- Journey on the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway
- Visit to Minehead, Dunster, Lynton & Lynmouth



The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Rail & Steam

Departing on 12 August 2016

The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo will once again unite performers from four continents to host one of the most spectacular shows in the world, a colourful kaleidoscope of music, dance and displays, set against the incomparable backdrop of Edinburgh Castle. The programme will include its most popular items - the Massed Pipes and Drums, Military Bands, display teams and dancers and of course, the poignant notes of the Lone Piper from high on the castle ramparts.

Prices Includes:

- Private coach travel from your local area
- Three nights' stay with cooked breakfast
- Three course evening meals on two nights
- Return journey on the Bo'ness & Kinnel Railway
- Visits to Edinburgh, Aberfoyle & Gretna Green
- Ticket to the Edinburgh Military Tattoo
- Circular cruise on the SS Sir Walter Scott



Buckingham Palace & the Houses of Parliament

Departing on 27 August & 10 September 2016

Each summer, when The Queen makes her yearly visit to Scotland, people from all four corners of the globe flock to London, for the chance to take a glimpse inside Her Majesty's official residence and one of only a few working palaces left in the world - Buckingham Palace. By joining our tour you can explore the lavish State Rooms which are extensively used for official and ceremonial duties, followed by a tour of the Houses of Parliament. Both landmark building will be hosting special exhibitions during our visit, so it's a great time to go.

Prices Includes:

- Private coach travel from your local area
- One night's stay with three course evening meal & cooked breakfast
- Entrance & guided tour of the Houses of Parliament
- Entrance to Buckingham Palace
- Free time in London

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Wonderful time for sports nuts

HOPE everyone is having a great Christmas and that your team's results are only adding to your enjoyment rather than putting a dampener on things.

As usual, the festive period is providing us with a sporting bonanza for those of us that get a bit jaded by the amount of corny Christmas specials on the telly.

Football fans in particular have plenty to look forward to, even though this busy couple of weeks is probably something that most of the players dread, with games coming thick and fast.

While I agree football in this country could do with a break mid-season, it shouldn't come during Christmas, as this part of the season has become too much of an institution in this country for it to just be ripped away.

A two-week lay-off after the third round of the FA Cup has

Wrighton SPORT

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mattywright86

been played would surely be a better option – a lot of us are short of cash by the time January comes along anyway.

It looks like wrapping up warm won't be far for the course this year as we head towards the end of the warmest December I can think of,

but there should still be a special atmosphere as crowds swell.

This always benefits Bedford Blues, who will be welcoming a larger number than normal when they host London Scottish at Goldington Road on New Year's Day.

Best of all, the Sky Sports cameras will be present this time as the Blues' followers again demonstrate how much better a crowd of 4,000 inside a small but packed ground is than the same number rattling around inside a football stadium much too large for them.

It's also a period where Luton will be hoping to kick-start a sluggish campaign that has ended the reign of the manager that got them promoted back to the Football League, John Still.

If you can't get out and about, then there's plenty on the box to lose yourself in as well, with cricket fans even able to get their fix by watching England's tour of South Africa, which got under way yesterday.

It will mean an early start for those who can't get enough Test cricket, although whatever happens, it will be tough

WINTRY SCENE: Snow covers the Kenilworth Road pitch a few winters back. With the unseasonable warmth we've been getting, it's unlikely scenes like this will be repeated during the festive period

to beat the memory of staying up on Christmas Day in 2010 and watching England skittle the Aussies out for 98 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

As strange as this might sound, it's also a fun time to be a reporter with the games coming so quickly.

It began for me at Moseley

RFC yesterday (finally, that place has a permanent stand) and continues tomorrow at Sixfields, where I'll be working for one of our sister publications, covering Northampton v Accrington.

Then it's off to Goldington Road in the New Year once any potential hangover has worn off.

This year comes with the added bonus that I don't have to worry about freezing my backside off for my craft – it really does feel more like April, doesn't it?

Enjoy all the action, wherever you're heading off to, and have a Happy New Year.

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WINTRY SCENE: Snow covers the Kenilworth Road pitch a few winters back. With the unseasonable warmth we've been getting, it's unlikely scenes like this will be repeated during the festive period

SNOW WOMAN: Somebody should have told this anatomically correct past Hatters fan that the game had been cancelled before the big chill set in

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Sport on sunday

Cuthbert: 'We let down Still'

LUTON TOWN

BY JAMES CUNLIFFE
sport@lsmmedia.co.uk

Luton's last-gasp 3-2 victory over Exeter last week lifted the mood after the John Still era ended, but defender Scott Cuthbert admitted the players had contributed to their former manager's sacking.

Paul Benson scored a winner in the 100th minute at St James Park to end a run of four straight League Two defeats that cost the 65-year-old his job last Thursday.

Under the temporary charge of Academy and Development Manager Andy Awford, the Hatters had taken a shock 2-0 lead against the run of play, but the Grecians levelled with nine minutes to go.

That was through an Alex Nicholls header in which Cuthbert was poleaxed, with the skipper requiring lengthy treatment, and when a linesman also got injured that led to nine minutes of time added on. But even that time had passed when Benson bundled the ball over the line for his third in two games.

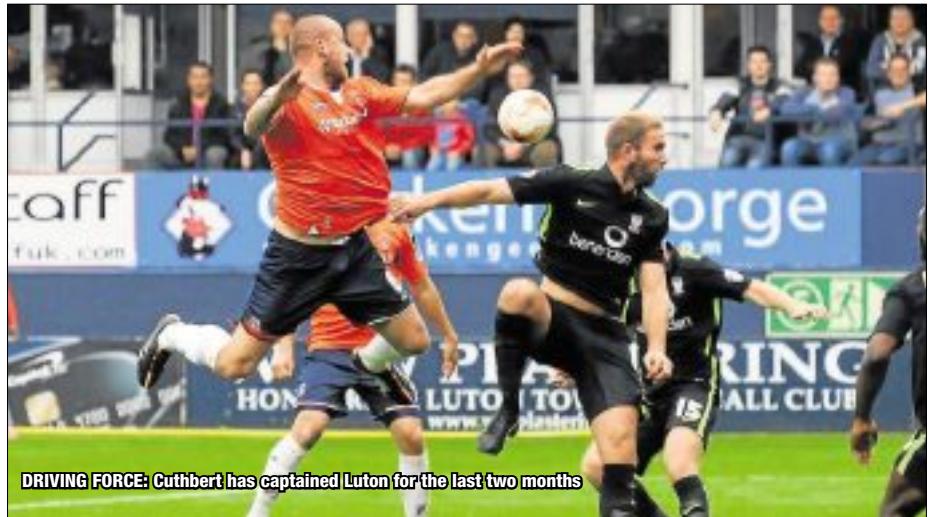
"We've conceded a lot of goals late on and it's a horrible, horrible feeling, but scoring in the 100th minute, what a feeling. It was unbelievably," said Cuthbert.

"It has been such a tough week. We've said goodbye to the manager that brought the club back to the Football League, a fantastic man who has brought us all to the club. We felt, and I certainly feel as an individual and as a team, that we let him down. For us to go out there under Andy, caretaker manager, and put in a real good performance – the quality might not have been there for the full 100 minutes, but the commitment was."

Jake Howells, who was brought in from the cold at left back after requesting to leave in the summer, said: "It has been a tough week for everybody. John was a brilliant person and he's done a lot for the club. It's hard for everyone. To get three points was a credit to him as well as everyone else at the club. He deserves it as much as anyone."

The victory, their first in five League Two games, moved Town up the table from 17th to 13th place and Cuthbert said: "It's a new start for us, with Andy coming in, and it's a great start as well. It's [about] looking forward now."

It took a stunning 71st minute Tom Nicholls free-kick to break the resilience of Cuthbert and co, who had doggedly spent much of the match repelling wave after wave of



DRIVING FORCE: Cuthbert has captained Luton for the last two months

Exeter attacks.

"That's the way I want to play every week. I think, at the start of the season, I was showing my qualities and I've had a bit of a dip personally," the centre back said.

"My performances of late haven't

been good enough, but I think [Saturday] was certainly a big improvement and I want to keep putting those kinds of performances in, week in, week out, because I know I can."

Cuthbert returned after two

games on the sidelines through injury and the Scot said: "I want to be playing every week. I didn't like sitting in the stands watching the Peterborough and the Northampton games – I want to be out there playing."

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Sport

on sunday

Howells never felt like outcast

FOOTBALL

BY JAMES CUNLIFFE
sport@lsmmedia.co.uk

JAKE Howells insists he was never treated as a pariah by Luton Town for wanting to leave, but is now grateful for a second chance at the club he still loves "to pieces".

The 24-year-old's Hatters career looked over in pre-season after he announced his intention to leave his boyhood club.

Although the club gave Howells their blessing, they rejected one transfer bid for his services while leaving him out of the first team squad altogether.

A seven-game loan spell at Yeovil in September came to nothing and that saw Howells return to Kenilworth Road to languish in Luton's reserves.

That was until last weekend when he was brought in from the wilderness to help them topple Exeter in a dramatic 100th-minute 3-2 League Two triumph.

Despite the seven-month gap between his 317th and 318th appearances Howells, who came through the Luton Academy and made his debut as a 17-year-old in 2008, said: "I didn't feel like an outcast at all, one bit."

"Everyone stood by me and respected me for what I've done for the club. It was completely up to me whether I wanted to move on or not and people stood by me.

"It is frustrating not being able to play [first team] games and playing reserve games, which is tough, but I've kept myself fit. I've got my chance now and I've got to grab it."

Howells admitted that his exile from first team action had been "a learning curve" and mentally difficult. With him out of the picture, a fourth straight defeat had seen the club slump to 17th place in the division and led to manager John Still being relieved of his duties last Thursday.

"It's tough but it's more tough watching the club that you love to pieces not doing so great and you can't give anything to it. But we're Luton Town and it's never easy," Howells said, adding: "John was trying to get me back in for a while and, as it goes, it was just one of those things, coincidence maybe, but I got put back in [after he left]. John was doing everything he could to put me back in."

Instead, caretaker boss Andy Awford was the man to hand Howells his first appearance for the club since the final game of last season.

It's tough watching the club that you love to pieces not doing so great and you can't give anything to it

"It was like another debut for me. It was that feeling again, that buzz again. It's nice to be back," Howells said, adding: "To be honest, I was more nervous than I was on my actual debut when I was younger because you've got to earn that respect again in a way."

"It was probably the wrong one at the time, I don't know, but it's one of those things. I look at it now that it's gone and I've got to prove a point again."

The left back position could be where he gets his chance from now on after starting there against Exeter, at the expense of Scott Griffiths. That, though, wasn't too daunting.

"When I first started playing in League Two when we were minus something points, I was playing left back," the former Wales Under-21 ace said, adding: "People have their own opinions, people dislike, like it, or not, but if we win and I'm playing left back then I'm happy."



BROUGHT BACK: Jake Howells made his first Hatters appearance in seven months

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